

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in this application:

1. (Cancelled).

2. (Cancelled).

3. (Cancelled).

4. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for storing optical fiber comprising:
a support member;

at least a first spindle disposed on said support member, said spindle offset with respect to the rotational center of said support member;

a holding member, said holding member adapted to hold said support member and said spindle in a way such that said support member is constrained in at least a first direction of movement, said holding member comprises a plate having a plurality of posts adapted in a way such that said support member can lie horizontally between said posts; and

wherein the diameter of at least a portion of said at least a first spindle is sufficiently large to prevent attenuation of optical signals transmitted over optical fiber disposed around the circumference of said spindle.

~~The apparatus of claim 2 wherein said holding member comprises a plate having a plurality of posts adapted in a way such that said support member can lie horizontally between said posts.~~

5. (Original) The apparatus of claim 4 further comprising means for holding said support members substantially stationary with respect to said holding member.

6. (Original) The apparatus of claim 5 wherein said means for holding comprises a plurality of holes disposed in said posts and a plurality of screws adapted to be screwed into said holes.

7. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim ~~1-4~~ wherein said at least a first spindle comprises two spindles.

8. (Currently Amended) A method for storing an optical fiber comprising:
securing at least a portion of said optical fiber onto an optical fiber reel, said optical fiber reel comprising a plurality of spindles, a support member and a holding member such that at least a first spindle of said plurality of spindles is disposed on said support member, said first spindle being offset with respect to the rotational center of said support member, and said holding member is adapted to hold said support member and said first spindle in a way such that said support member is constrained in at least a first direction of movement, said holding member comprises a plate having a plurality of posts adapted in a way such that said support member can lie horizontally between said posts;
and

rotating said optical fiber reel in a way such that said optical fiber is wound around at least a portion of ~~each of said plurality of spindles~~said first spindle; and

wherein, the diameter of at least a portion of said first spindle is sufficiently large such that when said optical fiber is wound in a substantially linear fashion in a way such that said optical fiber, disposed around the circumference of said first spindle, experiences substantially no torsional stress as it is wound around said at least a portion of each of said plurality of spindles.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8 wherein said ~~plurality of spindles comprises two spindles~~holding member is adapted to hold a plurality of support members.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8 wherein said step of securing comprises attaching a portion of said optical fiber to the rotational center of a ~~said~~ support member of at least said spindles~~first spindle~~.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein said portion of said optical fiber is that portion that is half the distance along the fiber from the ends of said fiber.